GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
AGRICULTURE
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:578
ANSWERED ON:04.03.2002
DEPLORABLE CONDITION OF FARMERS
RAJO SINGH;V.M. SUDHEERAN

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the condition of farmers in the country has become pitiable particularly in Bihar following decline in the prices of agricultural produce and that farmers are not getting remunerative prices for their produce;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Government have formulated any policy to control the increasing prices of agricultural inputs;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the steps taken/proposed to be taken by the Government to bring down the agricultural cost and to provide remunerative prices to farmers for their produce?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI HUKUMDEO NARAYAN YADAV)

(a) & (b): The wholesale prices of certain agricultural commodities are ruling below the Minimum Support Prices (MSPs) at some selected centres in the country including those in Bihar.

(c) to (e): The National Agricultural Policy (NAP) envisages, among other things, efficient use of inputs and their assured availability. In order to popularize the annually released/identified varieties of rice, wheat and coarse cereals and also to acquaint the farmers with the latest production technologies, Central Sector Schemes of minikit programme of rice, wheat and coarse cereals are being implemented in the country. A Seed Bank has been established to meet the contingent requirements of seed in the wake of natural calamities. A series of steps have been taken to increase farm credit. To enable availability of fertilizers to farmers at reasonable prices, the Government fixes the farm-gate price of urea, which is the only controlled fertilizer, while in case of decontrolled fertilizers it indicates the Maximum Retail Price (MRP) under the Concession Scheme for Di-Ammonium Phosphate (DAP), Muriate of Potash (MOP) and Complex fertilizers.The indicative MRP in case of Single Super Phosphate (SSP) is fixed by the respective State Governments.

The Government has taken various steps to protect the interests of the farmers and these include fixation of MSPs for major agricultural commodities and undertaking procurement operations thereof; implementation of Market Intervention Scheme (MIS); and using instruments of trade to discourage imports and encourage exports, etc.

The wholesale prices of agricultural commodities are constantly monitored and instances of market prices ruling below the MSPs are referred to the respective designated central nodal agencies for undertaking procurement operations. The designated central nodal agencies are required to intervene in the market for undertaking price support operations in case the prices fall below the MSP level fixed by the Government. There has been record procurement of agriculture commodities in recent years.